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Application/Control Number: 10/666,080 Page 2

Art Unit: 3734

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the prior art of record fails to teach or render obvious the overall claimed invention of an occlusion device comprising: a self centering mechanism which is laterally expandable to fill a defect, the mechanism comprising at least three rings located between a left and a right side wherein: a first ring is connected to the left side; a second ring is connected to the first ring; and a third ring is connected to the second ring and to the right side, or wherein sutures are used to connect the first ring to the left side, the second ring to the first ring, the second ring to the third ring, and the third ring to the right side at suture locations, or wherein heat laminating is used to connect the first ring to a first interior side, the second ring to the first ring, the second ring to the third ring and the third ring and the third ring to a second interior side at lamination locations, or wherein the ring comprise polyvinyl alcohol foam, or a self centering mechanism comprising a flexible honeycomb structure surrounding a center post and connected between a first and second set of arms.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

2. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. US 6485496.

Art Unit: 3734

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael G. Mendoza whose telephone number is (571) 272-4698. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Hayes can be reached on (571) 272-4959. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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MICHAEL J. HAYES
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER